

[0055] In one or more embodiments, a player may remotely operate a slot machine, possibly by using a telephone, PDA or other device (i) to transmit commands (directly or indirectly) to the slot machine, such as wager amounts and commands to select certain cards; and/or (ii) to receive output (directly or indirectly) from the slot machine.

[0056] The slot machine 200 may allow a player to play a game of skill, a game of chance, or a game that combines elements of skill and chance. In embodiments where the slot machine 200 allows the player to play games of chance, the slot machine 200 may further be operable to communicate with a random number generator (not shown), which may be a component of slot machine 200.

[0057] Referring now to FIG. 3A, illustrated therein is a diagram of an embodiment 300 of a reel shape. In the embodiment 300, a reel shape comprises a cylindrical surface 305 with a substantially convex outer first surface and a substantially concave inner second surface. Note that “substantially concave” and “substantially convex” refer to the general curvature of the cylindrical surface 305, relative to the entire expanse of the cylindrical surface. For example, the outer first surface does not have to be entirely convex to be within the scope of the present invention. Embodiments where the substantially convex outer first surface includes additional curvature along portions of the first surface (e.g., thus making the outer first surface appear bumpy or wavy, yet still substantially convex) are within the scope of the present invention.

[0058] Note that, in one or more embodiments, a reel shape may be a solid cylindrical shape. In such an embodiment, the reel shape does not have the substantially concave inner second surface but does have the substantially convex outer first surface.

[0059] Note further that the term “reel” as used herein refers to any surface formed by one or more display devices or any surface along which the one or more display devices may be located (e.g., any surface by which the one or more display devices may be supported), as well as any additional components that may be considered desirable to be included on, along the surface, or near the surface (e.g., a rim, as described with respect to FIG. 7, below, and/or one or more display memories, as described with respect to FIG. 3B, below). The term “reel assembly” is used interchangeably with the term “reel”.

[0060] The cylindrical surface 305 can be of a straight cylindrical shape or an oblique cylindrical shape. Moreover, the cylindrical surface 305 may have a fixed radius “r” 330. In other words, any cross section which is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the cylinder (i.e., parallel to a base) is a circle. In other embodiments, the cylindrical surface 305 may have a varying radius. In other words, any cross section which is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the cylinder (i.e., parallel to a base) is, for example, an ellipse. Note that the cylindrical shape comprises a respective base on each end, such that the left edge of the cylinder is the perimeter of the left base of the cylinder and the right edge of the cylinder is the perimeter of the right base of the cylinder.

[0061] In accordance with one or more embodiments, as will be explained in more detail below, one or more display devices may be shaped such that the left edge of the one or

more display devices takes the form of at least a portion of the perimeter of the left base of a cylindrical shape and the right edge of the one or more display devices takes the form of at least a portion of the perimeter of the right base of the cylindrical shape. The one or more display devices may thus simulate the shape of a reel, at least as viewed from one or more viewing perspectives (e.g., as viewed by a player facing the slot machine that includes the one or more display devices).

[0062] The cylindrical surface 305 has a side of width “W” 325 that defines the distance from the center of a left base of the cylindrical surface to the center of a right base of the cylindrical surface. In one or more embodiments, a width “W” of a reel shape is a width sufficient to display at least one indicia that defines an outcome of a game (e.g., between two and five inches).

[0063] The substantially convex outer first surface defines an outer periphery of the reel. In mechanical reel slot machines, a reel strip (made of, e.g., plastic or laminated paper) is placed along the outer periphery of the reel. A reel strip has printed thereon a plurality of indicia. In embodiments of the present invention, as described in detail elsewhere herein, one or more display devices may be located along (e.g., mounted upon or attached to) the outer first surface of a reel. For example, a single long flexible display may be “wrapped” around the outer first surface of a reel. In another example, a plurality of rigid or semi-rigid display devices (e.g., LED devices) may be located (e.g., attached) along the outer first surface. In other embodiments, one or more display devices may be the outer first surface of a reel. In other words, rather than the outer first surface being formed of another material (e.g., metal, plastic or fiberglass) and having display devices attached to or otherwise located along this material, the one or more display devices may form the outer first surface without another material or component serving as a base underneath.

[0064] Note that being located “along” the cylindrical surface 305 or outer first surface of the cylindrical surface 305 may comprise, for example, being located on the substantially convex outer first surface of the cylindrical surface, or adjacent to the perimeter of a base of the cylindrical surface. Note further that the one or more display devices may be mounted on or attached to the supporting cylindrical surface (permanently or removably). For example, the one or more display devices may be attached in a manner that allows a particular display device or particular portion of a display device to remain at a particular surface location of the cylindrical surface while at the same time being easily removable from the cylindrical surface for maintenance purposes. In one or more embodiments, being located along the outer first surface means being embedded within the outer first surface (e.g., such that the face of the display device is flush or substantially flush with the outer first surface).

[0065] Note that, in addition to the reel shape, other components of a typical reel are illustrated in FIG. 3A. The substantially concave inner second surface defines a circular cavity (a “first” cavity). In some embodiments, the first cavity of the cylindrical surface 305 may include an interior cylindrical surface 310 which in turn has a substantially convex outer first surface and a substantially concave inner second surface. The substantially concave inner second